

RESOLUTION

URGING THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII TO DEFER ACTION ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 638, H.D. 1, S.D. 1.

WHEREAS, if enacted into law, House Bill No. 638, H.D. 1, S. D. 1, would have unknown impacts on Hawaii's counties; and

WHEREAS, H.B. No. 638, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, would require the use of the instant runoff voting (IRV) method for elections for county offices in which no primary election is held and in special elections that would normally be subject to a runoff election if a candidate was not elected by majority vote in the initial special election; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to H.B. No. 638, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, voters may rank candidates for office in order of preference, and votes are then tabulated so that if no candidate receives a majority of votes, the candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated and the votes for the eliminated candidate are automatically transferred to those voters' second choice candidate, as if the votes were cast in a traditional election runoff; and

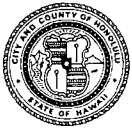
WHEREAS, the voting procedure described in H.B. No. 638, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, will complicate election ballots and outcomes, and educational tools need to be prepared and disseminated prior to its implementation; and

WHEREAS, H.B. No. 638, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, is applicable only to elections for county offices; and

WHEREAS, in his testimony before the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor on H.B. No. 638, H.D. 1, the Chief Election Officer of the Office of Elections, stated:

The Office of Elections takes no position on this bill, however, we would like to note that this bill would have a significant impact on county elections, which utilize special elections held in conjunction with the Primary Election, and that a subsequent run off special election, held in conjunction with the General Election, is required if a candidate does not obtain a majority. As such, we would defer to the counties as to any public policy issues that the counties may wish to raise as to the manner in which their elected officials such as mayor or council members are elected.

and



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WHEREAS, it could be interpreted that under the provisions of H.B. No. 638, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, the regular mayoral and city council elections would be decided at the City and County of Honolulu's first special election, which is held concurrently with the statewide primary election, since no separate runoff election among the two top vote getters would be held concurrently with the statewide general election; and

WHEREAS, since total voter turnout in a statewide primary election is typically much smaller than in a statewide general election, the forced use of IRV at first special elections would deprive the typically larger general election voting electorate the opportunity to hear from, evaluate and ultimately cast their vote on one of the two top vote getters in the first special election; and

WHEREAS, the passage of the bill would present uncertain and possibly significant fiscal impacts on county and state elections offices – particularly with regard to the preparation of voter educational materials, conducting county-wide voter education campaigns, procuring of elections firmware and software, ballot printing and distribution, postage costs, and elections staffing; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it opposes the approval of House Bill No. 638, H.D. 1, S.D. 1 and urges the State Legislature to defer further action on House Bill No. 638, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this Resolution be transmitted to the Speaker of the House and all members of the House of Representatives of the Hawaii State Legislature and the Senate President and all members of the Senate of the Hawaii State Legislature.

INTRODUCED BY:

Breene Hanaka

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

APR 19 2011

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers